

**AN ERROR ANALYSIS ON THE USE OF MODAL
AUXILIARY MADE BY ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDENTS
AT MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY
OF SURAKARTA**



**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Getting
Bachelor Degree of Education in English Department School of
Teacher Training and Education**

by

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APPROVAL

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RESEARCH PAPER

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I testify that this research paper there is no plagiarism of the previous literary work which has been raised to obtain bachelor degree of a university nor there any opinions of master pieces which have been written or published by other, except those in which the writing are referred in the manuscript and mentioned in literary review and references.

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Abstract

This study aim to describe the type of modal auxiliary used which is not in line with the usage or semantic meaning and illustrates the errors on the use of modal auxiliary that is often done by English Education Students at Muhammadiyah University of. The instrument used in this study is an essay test containing 9 modal auxiliaries. Subject in this study were 100 students of the English Education Students at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. The results showed that the semantic meanings had a lot of errors, namely 'prediction' (11%), while the modal that often had errors was 'may' (28.9%) and 'will' (27.2%) and the lowest was 'could' and 'might' (2.7% for each), as for modal that does not appear at all namely 'shall '. This study also examined 4 types of errors that occurred, namely 'misformation' with the highest number (48.2%), followed by 'addition' (26.5%), and 'omission' (25.2%), while the type was 'misordering' not used in this study.

Keywords: Modal Auxiliary, Error Analysis, Semantic Meaning

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki bagaimana siswa menggunakan 9 modal auxiliary dan makna semantiknya. Tujuan dari penelitian ini yaitu untuk mendeskripsikan jenis modal auxiliary yang digunakan tidak sesuai dengan penggunaan maupun makna semantiknya dan menggambarkan kesalahan dalam penggunaan modal auxiliary yang sering dilakukan mahasiswa jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini yaitu tes esai yang mengandung 9 modal auxiliary. Subyek dalam penelitian ini adalah 100 mahasiswa jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa makna semantik yang terdapat banyak kesalahan yaitu 'prediction' (11%), sedangkan modal yang sering terjadi error yaitu 'may'(28,9%) dan 'will' (27,2%) dan terendah yaitu 'could' dan 'might' (masing-masing 2,7%), adapun modal yang tidak muncul sama sekali yaitu 'shall'. Studi ini juga meneliti 4 tipe error yang terjadi yaitu 'misformation' dengan angka tertinggi (48,2%), disusul 'addition' (26,5%), dan 'omission' (25,2%), sementara tipe 'misordering' tidak digunakan dalam penelitian ini.

Kata Kunci: Modal Auxiliary, Analisis Error, Makna Semantik.

1. INTRODUCTION

Currently, English is a language that must be mastered by the whole world community. The establishment of time pushed the world especially non-English

country, to be more active in learning English including Indonesia. Sapir (1921) considers language as a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produce symbols. As we know, that English is an international language, moreover English has an important role in many fields. Indonesia strongly supports the establishment of English as an international language for younger generation, evaluated in the presence of compulsory subjects since elementary school, advanced in junior high school, and the last in high school and or university. In the implementation, learners in Indonesia are not possible immediately and smoothly in the mastery of English. Sometimes mistakes occur when executing one of the four English skills that are listening, reading, speaking and writing. So, harder learning is required for Indonesian learners in the effort to be mastered in English.

Grammar has many important materials which must be studied by learners. The materials became very important in English, because the learners need to be exercised and trained in order to have a good skills and competences in studying English. If their grammar is poor they are very likely to fail in their study or at least they will have difficulty in making progress. Because of its complexity, most learners have difficulties and errors. There are many aspects discussed in English grammar one of them is 'Modal auxiliary' or 'modal verb' namely: can, will, should, may, must. As mention in Biber et al (2002) there are nine central modal verbs in english: can, could, may, might, must, should, will, would, and shall. This study focus on error analysis on the use of grammatical features modal auxiliary only.

Modal auxiliary itself is very important to be mastered because this is one of the verb bases. Oftentimes, learners overlook some little things, including modal auxiliary features. On studying English, learners have to mastery those little things. These auxiliary add to a special semantic meaning such as permission, ability, prediction, ect. They have special grammatical features, have more than one meaning, and also complex. Some Grammatical modals change meaning in the negative must be expressed with other auxiliary. Even though the modals are used only with the simple form of the verb. And here the students still

have difficulties to make the sentences using auxiliary and to decide the meaning of the modal.

Based on the explanation above, the writer is interested in finding out the error analysis of the students mastery on the use of modal auxiliary and concludes that they consist of many words that should be mastered before the learners making a sentence. It tends to build the learners interest and motivation to making an English sentence well.

2. METHOD

This study is qualitative research type which is designed by presenting the data using description. "Qualitative research is inquiry aimed at describing and clarifying human experience as it appear in people's life and researchers using qualitative methods gather data that serve as evidence for their distilled description" Polkinghorne (2005:137). Moreover, the purpose of qualitative research is to find out the solution of the phenomenon happened in society with doing investigation to the object research.

This study was conducted at Department of English Education of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta which located at Jl. A. Yani, Pabelan, Kartasura, Surakarta, post code 57162. Department of English Education has been approved with the title of accreditation A on October 2nd, 2018. It has approximately 5.082 total students consist of male and female.

In collecting data, this study took written test. Written test need to do to measure the students' writing, to identify types of errors and to find out the common modal auxiliary incorrect that made by the students. Test is collected before starting the interview. According to Gay and Airasian (2000:145), a test is a sample terms of measuring a persons' ability, knowledge, or performance.

This study analyzed the data based on the instrumentations for data analyzing techniques. According to Miles and Michaels (1994) qualitative data analysis have three stages in analyzing data, namely data reduction: in this step the data is sorted and categorized according to (semantic meaning, 9 modal auxiliaries, types of error) data display: in this step, this uses the percentage model in the table, and drawing conclusion and verification: in this step, this study draws

conclusions from the previous step, which is also presented in the percentage form in the table.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Test was used as data collection on this study to find out the incorrect use of modal auxiliary and their semantic meaning, and to get information the kinds of error made by English Education Students at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. There are 9 modal auxiliaries, according to Biber et al (2002) modal auxiliary (central modal) has nine types namely can, could, may, might, must, should, shall, will, would. These modal types are grouped into three categories based on their meanings, can, could, may, might (permission/possibility/ability), must, should (obligation/necessity), and shall, will, would (volition/prediction). This study adopted the Bibers' theory to analysis on the use of modal auxiliary.

Table 1. Recapitulation of Incorrect Use of Modal Auxiliary Representing Semantic Meaning

Semantic Meaning of Modal Auxiliary	Percentage of Error
Permission	0%
Possibility	6%
Ability	0%
Obligation	3%
Necessity	9%
Volition	8%
Prediction	11%

From the data above, it is recognized that 2 out of 7 semantic meanings have no errors at all. The highest error occurred on the use of semantic meaning prediction with 11%, while the lowest error occurred on the use of semantic meaning 'obligation' with 3%. Total error on the use of modal auxiliary represent semantic meaning is 37 cases, this is under 50 or less than half of 100 students make errors on the use of modal auxiliary representing semantic meaning.

Table 2. Recapitulation Incorrect Use of Modal Auxiliary

Types of Modal Auxiliary	Percentage of Error
Can	14,9%
Could	2,7%
May	28,9%
Might	2,7%
Must	23,6%
Should	0%
Will	27,2%
Would	0%

Based on the data above, it is recognized that 2 out of 7 types of modal auxiliary have no errors at all. Yet, the highest error occurred on the use of modal auxiliary 'may' with 28,9%, followed by 'will' with 27,2%, while the lowest error occurred on the use of modal auxiliary 'might' and 'could' with 2,7% for each of them.

Table 3. Recapitulation of Types of Error

Types of Error	Percentage of Error
Omission	25,2%
Addition	26,5%
Misformation	48,2%

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the highest number of types of error were misformation with 48,2%. It means, partially of a hundred studentstend to do misformation errors. The second one is addition with 26,5%, then the lowest type of error is omission with 25,2%. Actually, omission and

addition have not much differences, it is almost have same percentage and also have same cases that are only 3 cases.

3.1 Types of semantic meaning of modal auxiliary that is commonly used incorrectly by the English Education students at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

In order to answer the research question, semantic meaning of modal auxiliary which is commonly used incorrectly by students is 'prediction' (11%), and 'necessity' (9%). Biber et al (2002:176) stated that modal auxiliary has three categories of meanings, first is permission/possibility/ability for modal can, could, may, and might, second is obligation/necessity for modal must and should, the last is volition/prediction for modal will, would, and shall. According to the theory, modal which representing semantic meaning 'prediction' is 'will', 'would', and 'shall'. But it turns out that there are other modal used namely 'can' and 'must'. Whereas for semantic meaning 'necessity' modal that should be used are 'must' and 'should'.

3.2 Types of modal auxiliary that is commonly used incorrectly by the English Education Students at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

The finding shows that the use of modal auxiliary in this study is coming from 9 modal auxiliaries. There is a modal which not appear at all. There is no error on the use of should and would. Two modal have the highest percentage of error are 'may' with 28,9% and 'will' with 27,2%. While the modal with the lowest percentage of error are 'could' and 'might' with 2,7% for each modal. In contrast to previous study by Sudirman (2010), that students made the highest error on the use of modal 'could' are 13.92%, while the lowest error value was in the use of modal 'can' with percentage of 11.90%. This previous research only focused on two modal auxiliaries, namely 'could' and 'can', and used two methods of collecting data, written tests and interviews. Those because in this current study used university student as respondents, while the previous study used eight grade of junior high school as respondents. There is a different quality and ability between each respondent.

3.3 Types of errors made by the students of English Education at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta in using modal auxiliary.

Types of error in this study just found 3 types: 'omission', 'addition', and 'misformation'. Type of error 'misordering' were not used because these study focus on the use of modal auxiliary only. From the analysis of the data, the highest number of types of error is 'misformation' with 48,2%, then 'addition' with 26,5%, and the last or the lowest number is 'omission' with 25,2%. In line with previous study by Maknun (2015) analysis errors on the use of modal 'can' and 'could' found the highest types of error misformation 55% errors, then addition 17% errors, followed by omission 15% errors and last 'misordering' 13% errors. Based on the high percentage of errors, it means that students' mastery on the use of modal auxiliary 'can' and 'could' was low, and they had many difficulties in mastering it. This previous study used interview as data collection then found that most students face difficulties on the types of Grammar modal 'could' and 'can' and also how to used it. In addition, the similarly between those current study and previous study is the types of error which has the highest number of error is 'misformation', followed by 'addition', then 'omission'.

4. CONCLUSION

This study investigated errors on the use of 9 modal auxiliary: can, could, may, might, must, should, will, and would by students. According to the analysis of the test, this study draws some point of view. The modal auxiliary representing semantic meaning which commonly used incorrectly by students is 'prediction' with 11%. It means, the sensitivity of students on the understanding of the context representing prediction is quite low. The types of modal auxiliary which commonly used incorrect by students are 'may' with 28,9% and followed by 'will' with 27,2%. Students tend to add some verb after modal particularly 'may' and 'will'. The kind of errors that frequently made by students is 'misformation' with 48,2%, followed by 'addition' with 26,5%, and 'omission' with 25,2%. It's proves that students mostly do not pay attention to what is being asked so there is more misinformation.

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